

An Introduction to Revolutionary Anarcho-capitalism

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March 1979

The libertarian "movement" suffers from a lack of credibility. Who listens to its ideologues outside of disaffected middle-class youth transiting between adolescence and the stodgy statism of their parents? Who can believe a movement which articulates no plans, or goals, and takes no effective and dramatic action? Virtually nobody. Who can respect, much less support, a political party which makes loud anti-statist noises but is led by avowed archists? No one with any sense of consistency. What anti-statist philosophy which makes no practical provision for the overthrow of the State in a contemporary context can be taken seriously? None!

The libertarian movement is dead because it was never fully alive as a distinct philosophy and political ideology. Only under the denominational rubric of "Anarcho-capitalism" have clearly distinguishable advances in "libertarian" theory been contributed. But even these have not constituted a complete program for victory in our time.

Revolutionary anarcho-capitalism, however, goes beyond merely repudiating the State; it unequivocally demands and details the abolition and dismantlement of the State wherever it exists. It is more than philosophically an-archist: it is actively anti-archist! Revolutionary anarcho-capitalism identifies an approach to the problem of the State no longer content with updating and correcting parochial American libertarian sentiments but one seeking a complete theory and method for overthrowing the State worldwide.

For us, the State is more than a set of ordinary and individual criminal actions, it is the broadly successful attempt to gain the sanction and/or acquiescence of a controlling part of a population for the ongoing violation of individual rights. As such, it presents a special world-historical problem which can only be effectively resolved by an organized class war between the oppressed and the oppressors. The enemy must be brought to justice. This situation is no mere misunderstanding, it is warfare.

Marxism, in the form of its "revolutionary" offshoots (Bolshevism, Castroism, Maoism, etc.), has attracted fervent supporters and destroyed governments because it demands justice and proposes effective means for overthrowing oppressors. The Marxists have generally won in the marketplace of ideas because they offered what activists really wanted: power for justice and change. In spite of the shoddiness of their results, they have had no significant competition as the only visible and viable opponents to oppression.

Libertarian thinking (including the pacifist-reformist anarcho-capitalism) has failed in the marketplace of political ideas for three basic reasons. Most fundamental has been the inability to translate an ostensibly "objective" rational egoist ethic into empirical standards applicable to existing realities. Little explicit understanding exists that rational egoism is a method for fulfillment, not an end in itself. Instead of a philosophy which motivates persons to fight for the best which human nature has to offer, rational(?) egoism has been rationalized into entrepreneurialist

escapism and the pseudo self-esteem of intellectualized hedonism.

We posit that a true rational egoist must place ethical identity at the pinnacle of his pyramid of values in order to achieve authentic fulfillment. A conscious entity not only needs general rules by which to operate, it needs specific empirical directives as well. In this world, at this time, the only empirically defensible and overriding consideration facing the individual is the injustice of the State and the ethical necessity to terminate the State. Choosing anything less as one's main objective in life represents an acceptance of a lower condition of personal ethical identity.

The failure to translate rational egoism has induced the second major problem of "Libertarianism": its willingness to stomach minimal statism, or at least, to cohabit the same party with "minarchists". Just as a truncated rational egoism has blinded them to the primacy of personal moral identity, and its revolutionary empirical consequences, anarcho-capitalists have slid into a political marriage which cannot work philosophically or in political practice.

We oppose the idea of reforming the State, not because some reformist tactics used within the frame of organized revolution are not worthy, but because a reformist movement is corrupted by its ideological acceptance of the State. Authentic anti-statists cannot long coexist in the same political vehicle with minimal statist once the contradictions are made clear. Though we can have fruitful alliances at times, we must travel different itineraries leading to antipodal destinations. There is no better way to destroy a nascent anarcho-capitalist movement than to link it with "minimal" statist or, for that matter (for different reasons), with the maximal statist Left.

These two deficiencies have of necessity led to the third and crucial failure of libertarianism: to meet the Marxist challenge - the revolutionary demand for justice. The forsaking of forceful action against the State and the failure to empirically define the enemy has made the erstwhile anti-statist position insipid, and impractical. The masses as well as the activist intelligentsia intuitively see through this weakness. "Libertarianism" has been, is, and will continue to be, a hackneyed wing of American Conservatism no matter how hard its ideologues seek to "disabuse" it from those links in the public eye. A movement which is congenitally reformist is conservative and no amount of shadow-boxing against Conservatism can disabuse Libertarianism from itself.

Revolutionary anarcho-capitalists go beyond the righteous assertion of the rational egoist credo to assert that the essence of human nature requires the attainment of an ethical identity objectively consistent with the world-historical context. Selfishness is indeed a virtue but the method of living must not be confused with the end sought.

In a world in which the State makes a war on all who would attempt to live free, we propose the ultimate logical extension of rational egoism - the Warrior Ethic. It posits that the fulfillment of human nature presupposes absolute personal sovereignty and that in a condition of slavery the crucial objective is to destroy the system of oppression. The Warrior Ethic requires an integrated personality in which physical existence and even the realm of conscious experience are hierarchically subordinated to the premises of one's ethical identity. To be a Warrior is to live as a rational egoist to the fullest, i.e.,

by never willfully sacrificing one iota of one's ethical identity. Specifically, it is to identify and pursue a mission in one's life whatever the costs or discomfort. All life is a struggle against adversity; but in our era, the natural antagonist of all who choose the best that human nature has to offer is the State. To live ethically is to do what must be done.

Anything less than total personal dedication to that objective, once it is understood, must be judged as a willfull acceptance of a lower identity. The Warrior Ethic poses to the individual these main questions: are you willing to live as a full human being, i.e., never willfully sacrificing one iota of your moral identity, or not? If you are, then how do you choose to fight your natural antagonist, the State? The only reasonable answers are "yes" and "with every means at my disposal."

The integration of fact and premise is the essence of a rational self-identity (which in turn is the only basis for a mature and healthy happiness) but to act upon what one knows to be true is all-necessary for the maintenance of that identity. Fighting the State with all of one's capacities is the only objective ethical resolution open to a rational egoist in the present empirical context. Any other course of action logically entails loss of identity because it is at odds with the necessary course of action to live qua ethically conscious being.

With this question settled we proceed to the basic ethical question of who can do what to whom in fighting the State. Our methodology for defeating the State is based on the Doctrine of Retaliatory Recapture. This recognizes the State as an ongoing system of violations. Within this context, an individual is ethically justified in recapturing property from the State, not only in his own momentary self-defense, but also in an attempt to end the obvious future threat of the State.

Those who passively permit (or are ineffective in preventing) the State from (ab)using their possessions in violating the rights of others have no moral claim against those who would make use of these means to defend themselves against the State. Thus, in a coordinated defensive war against the State, individuals and organized groups are entitled to use, occupy and consume property stolen by the State as long as these actions aid in terminating the aggression of the State. After the State is effectively defeated, restoration or property insofar as is possible must be made.

Revolution against the State can only take place within the context of a political army. A voluntary underground political army of international scope, under contractual discipline affords the only reasonable approach to fighting the State as well as providing a private agency of strategic area-defense during the process of abolition. Free institutions such as courts, police and military defense must be organized and appropriately visible to the masses during the transition to a stateless society. These institutions are integral to the functioning of a political army and the revolutionary process. That these "underground" courts and forms of enforcement horrify the constitutionalist minarchists is another obvious reason why we cannot cohabit the same political vehicle. The fact that the reformist anarcho-capitalists have not proposed these measures is just another symptom of the emasculation of their ideology by their ecumenical strategy.

In contrast, our strategy is not only revolutionary but global in scope. For instance, we do not propose to turn the USA into a "big Switzerland" because it is evident to us that little Switzerland could not long exist as such without the USA remaining strong in world affairs.

As in any complex enterprise, our strategy ascends logically step-by-step to its final end product. Our main target is to gain the United States as a revolutionary base but our ultimate objective is the dissolution of the Soviet and Chinese communist empires. We want peace but we do not fool ourselves about peace with Communists. The struggle will continue until one side wins entirely. We intend to win. World war is virtually inescapable. The question is who will win and survive.

Our strategy rests on the assumption that the Soviet Union must attack China. Thus, our main strategic problem will be to permit the Soviet Union to attack China without simultaneously preemptively attacking the U.S. Only an anarcho-capitalist revolution can succeed in persuading the Soviets of the non-threatening nature of the U.S. military strategic forces because of what will appear (to the Soviets) as a mass paralysis of central institutions. The Soviets will want to believe this. Simultaneously, however, we will have to convince the American population of the superiority of our military defense and the efficacy of abandoning the Chinese. (This won't be too hard when we put a half-trillion or so dollars back into production). In sum, we must withdraw the U.S. from the Third World War (which began long ago) to permit the self-destruction of the Communist empires and the construction of our revolutionary base.

The problem of strategic continental area-defense in post-statist America poses no conceptual difficulty for us as it has for others. The revolutionary political army apparatus, or some offshoot, will likely become the main defense agency. Its income will be derived in good part from its rightful possession of the so-called "Federal Lands" (minus the return of stolen private properties). These largely unexploited areas will generate a huge income under the press of an unleashed laissez-faire economy. Thus, without taxes, or coercion of any kind, the nascent anarcho-capitalist society will be able to flourish under the protection of the revolutionary defense agency which vanquished the State.

The "problem" of competing defense agencies which draws so much fire from residual statist poses no insurmountable difficulty for us. Living free is worth the risk and the trouble. We don't expect Utopia with the abolition of the State, merely the demise of the greatest engine of institutionalized injustice. For us, the world-historical victory of the absolute right of the individual to his own life and justifiably-acquired property is necessary and (for our time) a sufficient fulfillment.

Revolutionary Anarcho-capitalism provides the conceptual capability of dealing with the realities of human identity and political-economic oppression. It provides authentic anti-statists with an ideological armory to divest the usurpatory leadership of altruist-collectivist ideology over the oppressed. With the Warrior Ethic we can transcend the petty egoist limitation of bourgeois "Libertarianism" and its indelible link to anti-revolutionist Conservatism. In turn, the Doctrine of Retaliatory Recapture frees the anti-statist movement from the altruist morality trap which restricted political fighters from turning the guns of the State against the State.